



# *The Coolidge Times*

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## *A Letter from the Principal*

By Amy B. Clouter

I hope this finds you well rested and relaxed, more ready to meet the requirements of a busy Monday than you might have been last week. I know last week posed a tough transition for a lot of us. Although I relished the opportunity to savor long weekends, I also enjoyed some productive time alone in the building. Three days presented me with ample time to reassess my strengths and goals and to get to work on the latter. As it happened, I also learned a thing or two about flexibility. My laptop died.

My first technology-free day passed by uneventfully: the computer died in the afternoon, after all. I emailed for help from home and decided to wait it out. In fact, the waiting was initially wonderful. Without a computer, I was free to focus on the physically immediate: reducing clutter on my desk, filing accumulated paperwork, provisioning for the tasks ahead, and building “to do” lists. As with other things, however, the bliss of being beyond electronic reach passed. By Friday afternoon I realized that much of my “to do” list

hinged on my laptop’s recovery. I gained a renewed appreciation for the skills of our ITAMs staff. I also had to come to terms with how woeful my ability to improvise had become. Writing by hand was exhausting, and messy. Making phonecalls to fellow administrators to make sure I was in the loop was inefficient to me and intrusive to them.

I am happy to report that I am typing on a replacement laptop now. I also feel obliged to share a last lesson by adding a public service message to this column: Remember to back up your files a regular basis!

Fortunately I can also share that in the same week I was laid low by technology failure, I was also wowed by its success. As I was struggling with my hard drive, one of our third grade teachers was using microphones, video and camera to record a once-in-a-lifetime-experience. Recently Shirley LeMay realized a lifelong dream by traveling to Mexico to the remote mountainside where the monarch butterflies migrate every year. This year she witnessed the scene, and thanks to the technology she brought

with her (and to the ITAMS staff that prepared her) we can all enjoy the trip with her. Maggie Korab, a Coolidge parent who works with Shrewsbury High School students to produce video, will be helping Shirley to share her experience with the larger school community. This poses a different type of challenge: Shirley returned with about 450 photographs, several interviews, and countless stories.

In closing, please consider how the use of technology can help us communicate at reduced cost.

Sincerely,

## **WANT MORE INFORMATION AND LESS PAPER?**

Please email Mrs. Stacey if you are interested in receiving the Times as an email attachment instead of a “hard copy”. Don’t forget the Coolidge listserv! Boost our enrollment and reduce paper at the same time by signing up today

## A Note From The Co-

## Presidents: ☺

Welcome March! Winter has flown by, which is surprising since normally it drags, but we certainly can't complain much about the weather. As long as the cold doesn't continue into April, we'll be all set. As we approach the last few months of the school year, we really need to look at next year and the PTO board. We have heard little from people who may be interested in holding board positions next year or who may like to become more involved in the PTO. The PTO is a vital part of any school environment. Without a well formed PTO, there will be no in school enrichments such as author visits, no busses for field trips, no Field Day, no movie nights, Family Fun Day, Spring Fling etc. Please, we are asking for people to step forward to take an active role in the enrichment of their children's education. Without you, your children will lose activities that enhance their educational experience and reinforce what they are learning in the standard curriculum. That being said, we ask that you please talk to any current board member for information about the board or about chairing a committee. At our next PTO meeting, we will have descriptions of the board positions available as well as descriptions of the chair opportunities.

Speaking of our next PTO meeting, it is being held **Tues. March 13<sup>th</sup>**. At this meeting, we are hoping to

have a member of the School Committee available to discuss the current budget situation. It is imperative that people get informed and be prepared to vote on the issue in May. We hope everyone will take this opportunity to learn more about the school and town budget.

Keep in touch,

Karen and Sue

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### IMPORTANT DATES:

- **Tuesday 3/13**  
PTO Meeting
- **Thursday 3/15**  
Movie Night
- **Friday 3/16**  
No school
- **Friday 3/30**  
*Spring Fling*



### WEATHER ADVISORY

The children will go out to recess every day as long as it is not raining and the temperature is above 20F (including wind chill factor). Please send your child to school dressed appropriately for outdoor play. **Boots are especially important on warmer slushy days.** Sneakers will not keep feet dry, and we will be going out! Please feel free to call me (508-841-8887) if I can help with the purchase of any of these items for your child. Thanks!

*A note from Santo Domingo.*

*Thank you to everyone for making a difference in the lives of those in need!*

*Hi mom,*

*I'm here at the convent, and I'm loving it! The nuns are amazing..they are SOO nice and they're excellent cooks. We arrived last night by bus--we had our very own dominican driver who followed Hermana Valdair (one of the nuns from Brazil) to the convent. We put our luggage in a box trailer that was attached to the back of the bus--I was a little afraid that it would fall off! The ride to the convent took about 1/2 hr. We went through the streets of Santo Domingo and saw tons of people walking on the streets or sitting on their front patios blocked in by wire gates. There is so much poverty here. The streets are unpaved and narrow, the houses side by side and blocked in by gates. The convent is beautiful. I think it's probably the only decent place to live around here. The girls sleep upstairs and John and Brother Brian downstairs. We have 3 to a room, and they had balloons and little presents for us on our beds when we arrived with our names on them.*

*Yesterday we went to mass in the morning in the church attached to the convent. It's small, but beautiful. We sat with a lot of the little kids that were there..they attach onto us..it's really cute. The priest asked during his sermon who in attendance was poor, and everyone raised his hand. Then he asked those in attendance if there were others more poor than them, and everyone responded yes. He said even though they're poor, they should share with those who are less well off than them. Today was our first day with the kids. I did arts and crafts with them this morning--I'm doing really well speaking! They are adorable! I love them all. They're so poor though..it's horrible. We did a home visit after morning session to a home in which four people live. It's a one room home that looks like a shack. There's barely enough room for 2 beds and a table. I almost started to cry..it was soo sad. Well anyways I'm glad I could do this--these people really need us. The nuns said they've never seen so many donations..so please tell Coolidge that we are so thankful and the children will really benefit from everything that they've donated. There's a cute boy who lives here at the convent because his mother left named Franklin..we already picked out a few outfits for him!*

*Love you mom---I'll talk to you soon!  
(Mrs. Stacey's daughter Jennifer)*